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DOCK DIFFICULTIES.

Col. Whitney Explains Matters and Appeals for Help.

Gentlemen:—Punta Gorda is involved in a very large undertaking during a financial stringency. The situation demands a plain statement of facts and a direct appeal to both the men and women of the town.

The writer feels forced to make it personal, not from choice, because he would be glad to escape the responsibility personally that he finds himself in and doesn't relish notoriety. But he is unable to shift that responsibility. In order to carry it successfully to completion, execution depends upon you.

The public works now starting are not ours. They belong to you. Neither Mr. McAdow nor Mr. Cooper nor myself are building a dock, or a school, or water works, or a lighting plant. You are; and within six months, if we stand as a unit, Punta Gorda will be a very different town and occupy a very different place upon the map.

The difficulties at times seem insurmountable. In organizing forces, gathering material, harmonizing discords and forcing the execution of plans, the embarrassment has been more than I would wish to assume voluntarily. It is true, as some say, that I have had to use cheek, gall, nerve and brass. That has been distasteful to me, as it may have been to some of you; and what makes it worse, instead of using less in future, I feel I've got to use more.

As a rule, every body has been willing, but some have not, or they wait for others to do for them. I find labor, supplies and supposed mistakes charged to me and bills sent me personally. Men demand money from me on account of future work they expect to do.

It is to understand the situation that I now write personally and appeal for aid. The trustees may not have met the approval in working out the details of every body. We have not tried to do so. It would be impossible. We have merely proceeded and done the best we could under the conditions as they arose. The project was started without funds or any immediate prospects. We hoped to sell bonds in the North. We laboriously endeavored to do so by flooding the bond market with offers to sell. We could get no offers. Our town was at low financial ebb. In this situation, Mr. McAdow came to our rescue and without him we would now be helpless. He offered to take bonds, to buy the lumber, about \$3,000.00. The lumber is now sawed and ready to be put on the ground.

We then tried to place bonds for the construction. We found the lowest bid for driving the piling was 85c apiece and the lowest bid for construction was \$8.00 per thousand feet of lumber. As there will be about 1,000 piling and from 130,000 to 140,000 feet of lumber used, it will be seen that we would have to have thousands of dollars more where we had an empty treasury.

Mr. McAdow offered to do this: If the people meant business and

were willing to help and do their part in earnest and would show public spirit even to the point of some sacrifice, and if we could get the piling driven by paying reasonable wages, he would take enough more bonds to get the piling driven; and that, if then the people would, as we started, contribute either personal services or put a man in their place to construct the frame work, he would see that the iron work was bought and a competent overseer placed in charge to use the services of the town to advantage.

In this situation, Clayton Porter came to the rescue. In fact, without Clay from the beginning, we would be helpless. He offered to take his chance of making wages at 50c. a piling. We thereupon rejected all bids and Clay is driving the piling, and Mr. McAdow has employed Mr. Fries to supervise and oversee the construction.

Word went out that Mr. McAdow was building the dock and hence the writer found it almost impossible in almost a week of endeavor, to organize and gather money to keep the town end of the bargain.

He finally had to organize a paid crew to go for the balance of the piling, by making a man-to-man canvass and had to resort to the embarrassing expedient of going to women for aid.

Mr. McAdow has, out of pure generous impulse, agreed to do what we were unable to get anyone North or South to do. He thinks and rightly, that if the town is in earnest, it can and must do its part. The writer undertook to agree that the town would do its part. It is for us to get the piling up. Clay needs it to proceed. We are short about 200 or more piling. We must keep our crew after getting all we have to send for more. We must keep men constantly employed until the dock is completed.

There is a fund opened in the bank known as Improvement Fund. It is urged that every one place in it with their name from the price of a man's wages for a day, \$1.50, to as much as they can, or hand it to the writer. An account is made in the paper periodically. It is also urged as a necessity to keep our contract, that squads of 5 men be organized with a captain to each squad, and report names to writer, and when his squad will be ready for duty, a day at a time for each squad.

We are about to buy all rock of the ice plant. If there is any money left in the Improvement Fund, it will be used to make a rock wall in the bay and fill in and make a town park. A wholesale house is already arranged and will go in as soon as the dock is completed. The project for deep water has been made on a new basis. Mr. Cooper has had a long talk with Mr. Sparkman about it and Mr. Sparkman took occasion in his speech of Oct. 27, at Arcadia, to say, that under the new conditions, with a dock and the utilizing of the water we already had, that we would get deep water in the next congress. The writer feels assured of it from the further fact that Mr. Fletcher is pledged to aid us in the senate.

An electric light system is to go in and the water works system completed during 1909. Another

JAPANESE PERSIMMON.

One of the Best Fruits Suited to Florida Soils.

Who among the natives of Dixieland does not remember with tingling blood and smacking lips those frosty mornings of October and the persimmon trees? asks A. C. Sill in the St. Petersburg Times. Out along the streams and on the hills we go for that most luscious of fruits; then the 'possum hunts and the roast 'possum, sweet potatoes and persimmon beer to wash it down. This fruit is said to have caused more straggling in the ranks of the armies during the "late unpleasantness" of forty years ago, than all other causes combined.

The Japanese have taken the persimmon and thinking it was "dwarfed" enough, they proceeded to enlarge it many fold and in the Japanese persimmon we have a luscious fruit and something of

bond election will be called next year for a school building, if we can place the bonds, as a very little of the present bond issue will be used for the present dock and the balance canceled.

Arcadia wishes to promote a commercial alliance with us. Mr. Jones, president of the Arcadia Board of Trade, and the writer have had a long discussion over the possibilities which the channel dock will open up for them. They prefer water transportation through Punta Gorda for various reasons. A meeting of the Punta Gorda Board of Trade will soon be called to name delegates to attend a joint meeting of the Arcadia Board of Trade. At that meeting plans will be discussed, if feasible, for constructing a hard road between the two towns and placing on it a public motor or traction engine to haul 10 to 20 wagon loads at a time to vessels over our dock, or an electric traction line, or a freight boat on the river down to our wharf.

The best answer as to whether it would pay or not, would be the immense traffic now on the A. C. L. and cheaper water rates to the Northern markets and the opening new of markets. This is the salvation of this part of the world. We should also open up our land to vegetable truckers by systematic advertising.

The above is the program, gentlemen, and justifies and shows the necessity of this personal appeal. It's up to you.

Since last account, Fippen Adams has sent me \$13.00, Mrs. Allen \$10.00. Expenditures since last accounting will be given in next issue. Mr. Corbett has placed E. Ward at work at ice factory arranging logs in lengths and cutting them for pile driver and other purposes, until his subscription runs out. Mr. Earnest has placed Sam Williams at duty on the rafting crew and getting more piling. Charlie Roe has placed — on same work. Dr. Wade has placed Capt. Kelly in charge of the raft crew. Ed Wotitzky supplies the grub for crew. Mr. Sam Johnson supplies gasoline. Mr. Straughan's boat is in commission, and not the least of the contributors, is Mr. Jordan, who goes to the expense of publishing this to aid in arousing the town to its present opportunities and to action.

E. A. WHITNEY.

good value and for healthfulness unsurpassed.

There has been some confusion about the names and varieties among nurserymen, but they seem to have agreed, at present, and a list of 20 or 25 varieties carried by some has been cut down to a few of the best.

The Japanese varieties are mostly propagated on the wild virgin roots by grafting.

A list of the varieties follows: Zengi. This fruits rather early here and while it is one of the smallest it is dark fleshed and of excellent qualities and good to eat while still firm. This tree begins to ripen in August and continues for about four months.

Hacheya. This is the largest known variety, very fine for preserving and evaporating, but not quite so good to eat out of hand.

Hyakuma. This is nearly as large as the preceding, the fruit is dark fleshed, very highly colored and rich and is probably the best flavored of all. The trees are good growers, though they have been rather shy bearers for me.

Yeddo-Ichi. This tree has a very good habit of growth and fruiting, and should be considered for its fruit qualities by all who are planting.

Tane-Nashi. This variety has been somewhat more successful for me than any other. The fruit is among the best of the yellow fleshed varieties, which are astringent until ripe.

Yemon. This was much lauded a few years ago as the great market sort, but it does not seem to have held to its prestige. It has not had as good a trial with me as the other varieties named.

Tzura, or Tsuru. This is the latest variety here and I have kept them into February and March. I have had trees which were full of fruit so late in the season that they shed all their leaves and were a beautiful sight. The lateness of this variety makes it worthy of planting.

Okame. The state horticultural report, 1907, says this is the best for home use and local market. This variety has not succeeded so well with me, as I have my trees on rather heavy soil.

United States Farmers' Bulletin No. 142 says that the persimmon is the richest of all fruits, containing more than twice the nutriment of bananas. The demand for this fruit is increasing and those of you who have eaten Japanese persimmons cut up with sugar and cream can tell why all right.

Prof. W. E. Griffins, author of "The Mikado's Empire," tells us: "As to the fruit itself, it is nutritious, palatable, and to a high degree charged with those chemical ingredients which give most fruit their value in preserving the health and purifying the blood. This fact is insisted on by some Japanese doctors, some of whom I have known to cure their patients by a 'persimmon cure' like that of the 'grape cure' of Southern Europe."—A. C. SILL.

Gainesville Sun:—Hon. Duncan U. Fletcher, Florida's new Senator, is having honors heaped upon him. He is one of the ablest men in the country and will reflect honor upon his State in the upper branch of Congress.

MODEL TRUCK FARM.

Two Acres Producing \$2,000 Annually.

Two blocks north of the Methodist church in this city, D. Rotundo has in cultivation two acres of land that will easily yield him \$2,000 worth of vegetables annually, says the Kissimmee Valley Gazette.

Until the past winter, this land had never been cultivated, being considered of little value, as it adjoins the cypress swamp and was thought to be subject to overflow, but Mr. Rotundo, who is an experienced truck grower, knew that it could be made into a model garden that would yield abundantly of anything planted. After acquiring possession of the ground, his first work was to clear it of Bermuda grass and weeds, after which he grubbed it at least eight inches deep, thoroughly pulverizing the earth before making the beds. He then had it ditched, a well bored and the ground well fertilized.

As this garden was looked upon by many of our citizens as an experiment, Mr. Rotundo's progress was carefully watched, and many were the surprises when his celery and lettuce sprung into life almost within a night. Lettuce maturing much the quickest, was the first transplanted, and it is yielding a most magnificent crop of good-size heads. There is about one half acre of celery already transplanted, and as much more ground will be used for the same vegetable as soon as the lettuce is out of the way. Onions and turnips are proving just as abundant a crop; in fact, everything planted in the garden is doing better than the most optimistic dared hope.

This ground will be made to yield at least four crops of vegetables a year. First, lettuce will be planted; and as soon as that is out of the way, celery will be put in the same bed, which will be cut in March, when Irish potatoes will be planted; and as soon as they are dug, beans will take their place, which will ripen in time to give way to the next lettuce crop. In that way the ground will be kept constantly producing truck that is always salable.

Mr. Rotundo claims he will produce at least \$2,000 worth of truck a year on his two acres, and that the total cost, including his own (Continued on page 2.)

Fort Myers Press:—The first of the week, John Jack, of the firm of Shaw & Co., taxidermists, showed us a white mullet, or king mullet. This fish is like any other mullet, save he is perfectly white. It is said these fish are known as the king mullet, and lead the school of fish in the water. The one in question was captured by Mr. Murray, a fisherman, down the coast.

The papers of the large cities are all right, if you want them, but it is your home paper that sympathizes with your affliction and rejoices with you in your prosperity. In short, it is the home paper that mentions the thousand and one items in which you are interested during the year, and do not find in papers of large cities.—Ex.